

## Opportunity to Comment

The Forest Service, Uinta National Forest, Spanish Fork Ranger District, has made a preliminary assessment that the following projects are within categories of actions listed in the Forest Service NEPA Handbook (FSH 1909.15, Chapter 31) that are excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and that no extraordinary circumstances exist that would preclude use of these categories.

Spring Lake Waterworks Special Use Permit - A Use Permit would be issued for the purpose of maintaining existing water system facilities including a concrete water collection structure and chain link fence at Picayune Spring, a buried waterline to carry water from Picayune Spring to Spring Lake, and a storage tank and chlorinator facility. The existing facilities are located in Township 9 South, Range 2 East, Sections 28 and 29, Salt Lake Meridian. The Project is within category 31.2, Item 15 "Issuance of a new special use authorization for a new term to replace an existing expired special use authorization when the only changes are administrative, there are no changes to the authorized facilities or increases in the scope or intensity of authorized activities, and the applicant or holder is in full compliance with the terms and conditions of the special use authorization." A legal notice announcing an opportunity to comment on the proposal was previously published in the *Provo Daily Herald* on November 12, 2004.

Maple Bench Campground Repair and Maintenance - This proposed project would include adding gravel to existing campsites and pathways, placing boulders to limit motor vehicle access, signing, replacing rock rings with metal fire pits or grills, replacing missing or broken picnic tables, and replacing two vault-toilet restrooms. The Maple Bench Campground, located adjacent to Peteetneet Creek, is located in Township 10 South, Range 2 East, Section 10, Salt Lake Meridian. The Project is within category 31.12, Item 5 "Repair and maintenance of recreation sites and facilities." A legal notice announcing an opportunity to comment on the proposal was previously published in the *Provo Daily Herald* on April 25, 2003.

Additional information regarding these projects can be obtained from: Duane Resare, Spanish Fork Ranger District, 44 West 400 North, Spanish Fork, UT 84660, or by calling 801798-3571.

Dip Vat Creek Fish Barrier Project - The Spanish Fork District of the Uinta National Forest, in coordination with Utah Division of Wildlife, is proposing to install a fish barrier at the confluence of Dip Vat Creek and Sixth Water in the Diamond Fork drainage. The fish barrier would be located in Township 7 South, Range 6 East, Section 32, Salt Lake Meridian, Utah County. The fish barrier would keep brown trout out of the upper reach of Sixth Water Creek so that they are no longer competing with Bonneville cutthroat trout. The proposed fish barrier would be constructed using natural materials such as onsite boulders.

This project falls within FSH 1909.15 31.2(7) “Modification or maintenance of stream or lake aquatic habitat improvement structures using native materials or normal practices.”

A legal notice announcing an opportunity to comment on the Proposal was previously published in the *Provo Daily Herald* on June 23, 2005. For additional information contact Ron Smith, Uinta National Forest Supervisor’s Office, 801-342-5100.

Vernon Reservoir Vegetation/Sage Grouse Habitat Restoration Project- The Spanish Fork Ranger District proposes to enhance vegetation/sage grouse habitat in the Vernon Reservoir. The proposed site is located north and east of Vernon Reservoir in T9S, R5W, Sections 14, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 34, Tooele County, Utah.

Approximately 300 acres of sagebrush be treated mechanically. Sagebrush will be thinned in a mosaic pattern to create as much edge effect as possible. This would open up the sage brush canopy and create a mixed age class of sagebrush. This treatment will also allow the understory grasses and forbs that are currently suppressed by the thick sage brush canopy to be released. The treated area will be seeded with a seed mix which will include a variety of forbs that are desirable to sage grouse and which are adapted to the ecosystem. Approximately 600 acres of juniper whips, in areas previously chained by the Forest Service, would also be lopped and scattered.

A fence would be constructed to protect the seedlings from cattle grazing during establishment. This fence would be approximately 2.5 miles and would split one grazing unit into two grazing units. The seeded area would be rested from cattle grazing for a minimum of two growing seasons to allow the new plants to become established. An existing livestock watering pipeline would be extended and a trough added on the north side of the new fence to provide livestock water, since cattle would be fenced out of their current watering troughs. Two spurs would be added to the existing pipeline and small dugouts created and fenced to provide water and small riparian areas for use by sage grouse and other wildlife.

This project falls within FSH 1909.15 31.2(6) “Timber stand and/or wildlife habitat improvement activities which do not include the use of herbicides or do not require more than one mile of low standard road construction (Service level D, FSH 7709.56).”

A legal notice announcing an opportunity to comment on the Proposal was previously published in the *Provo Daily Herald* on August 25, 2005. Additional information regarding this project can be obtained from: Renae Bragonje, Spanish Fork Ranger District, 44 West 400 North, Spanish Fork, UT 84660 or by calling 801-798-3571.

Elmers Spring Trough Addition-The Spanish Fork Ranger District is proposing to install an additional livestock water trough at the existing Elmers Spring Water Development on the Billies Mountain Allotment located in the Utah County T9S, R4E, SE ¼ Section 21. The new trough would be approximately 14 feet in length. The existing water development includes a developed spring, protected by a 4-wire barbed wire fence, and a 500 gallon Powder River Trough.

Old Rays Valley Road Water Developments - In 2003, the Forest Service reconstructed a portion of the Rays Valley Road (Forest Service Road # 387). As part of the project, a portion of the old road and adjacent stream was fenced to exclude livestock. To provide livestock water the Spanish Fork Ranger District proposes to implement the following projects:

*Bend Water Development:* Develop a spring source in the seep just below the bend in the old Rays Valley road in Utah Country, T8S, R6E, NW 1/4, NW 1/4 Section 6. The seep and spring development would be protected from livestock with construction of a post and pole fence. Water would be delivered by approximately 700 feet of buried pipe to a trough approximately 14 feet in length.

*Sage Hen Water Development:* Develop a spring source at Sage Hen Spring in Utah County, T8S, R5E, N 1/2 Section 1. The spring is already protected from livestock grazing by an existing post and pole fence. Water would be delivered by approximately 0.7 miles of buried pipe to a trough approximately 14 feet in length.

*Old Exclosure Water Development:* Develop a spring source in Utah Country, T8S, R5E, N 1/2 Section 1. The seep and spring development would be protected from livestock with construction of a post and pole fence. Water would be delivered by approximately 500 feet of buried pipe to trough approximately 14 feet in length. Additional water will be delivered to this trough by approximately 500 feet of buried pipe from Sage Hen Springs.

Grove Hollow Water Development -To improve livestock distribution within the Dutch Canyon Unit of the Benmore Allotment and decrease riparian impacts from cattle, the Spanish Fork Ranger District proposes to develop a portion of the water at Grove Hollow and collect the water in a head box.. The spring is located in Tooele County, T10S, R5W, SE ¼ Section 7. Water would be delivered by approximately 500 feet of buried pipe to a trough approximately 14 feet in length located away from the riparian area. The spring source would be fenced from livestock with a barbed wire fence.

North/South Unit Boundary Fence and Cattle Guard - The Spanish Fork Ranger District proposes to reconstruct an old fence in Tooele County, Utah T9S, R5W, section 25 and T9S, R4W, Section 29 used at one time to protect a seeding project. This barbed wire fence will divide the Sharps Valley Allotment into two units so the cattle can be managed with a rotation system. The fence would be approximately 1.8 miles long. The barbed wire will be spaced to address wildlife concerns. A cattle guard would be placed in the Lofgreen Road (Forest Service Road # 038).

Harker Canyon pipeline extension, trough addition and drift fence -To improve livestock distribution within the Harker Canyon Unit of the Vernon Allotment and reduce riparian impacts from cattle, the Spanish fork Ranger District proposes to extend the Harker Canyon Pipeline approximately 0.8 miles with buried pipe to the west of Harker Creek and install a trough approximately 14 feet in length.. The District also proposes to install

a second trough approximately 14 feet in length to the east of Harker Creek on the existing Harker Canyon Pipeline. By constructing approximately 1/2 mile of fence, the remainder of the unit along Harker Creek will be utilized as a riparian pasture for a limited amount of time until riparian allowable use standards are met in the area. The proposed improvements are located in Tooele County, T 9S, R6W, Sections 35 and 36.

Cottonwood 8/South 10 Unit Boundary Fence #2 - The Spanish Fork Ranger District proposes to construct approximately ¼ mile of barbed wire drift fence on the West Cottonwood Allotment in Tooele County, T10S, R 6W, NW ¼ Section 17. The barbed wire would be spaced to address wildlife concerns. The fence would prevent cattle drift through a saddle which separates the Cottonwood 8 Unit from the South 10 Unit.

A legal notice announcing an opportunity to comment on the range improvement projects (Elmers Spring trough, Old Rays valley road water developments, Grove Hollow water development, and the north/south unit boundary fence and cattle guard) was previously published in the *Provo Daily Herald* on November 9, 2004. Additional information regarding these projects can be obtained from: Renae Bragonje, Spanish Fork Ranger District, 44 West 400 North, Spanish Fork, UT 84660 or by calling 801-798-3571.

This comment period provides those interested in or affected by these projects an opportunity to make their concerns known. It is being provided pursuant to the July 2 and September 16, 2005, orders issued by the U. S. District Court for the Eastern District of California in Case No. CIV F-03-6386JKS. Those who provide timely and substantive comments will be eligible to appeal the decision pursuant to 36 CFR part 215 regulations.

### **How to Comment and Timeframe**

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral, and electronic comments will be accepted for 30 calendar days following publication of this notice in the *Provo Daily Herald*. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for this proposal. You should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Written comments must be submitted to the Responsible Official: Spanish Fork District Ranger, Spanish Fork Ranger District, 44 West 400 North, Spanish Fork, UT 84660 or can be faxed to 801-798-3050. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Oral comments must be provided at the Responsible Official's office during normal business hours via telephone by calling 801-798-3571 or in person. Electronic comments must be submitted in rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc) to *comments-intermtn-uinta-spanishfork@fs.fed.us*. Comments must meet the information requirements of 36 CFR 215.6. Only those who submit timely and substantive comments will be eligible to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR 215. Substantive comments submitted during the previous comment periods will be considered and commentors will be eligible to appeal; resubmittal of comments is not necessary.